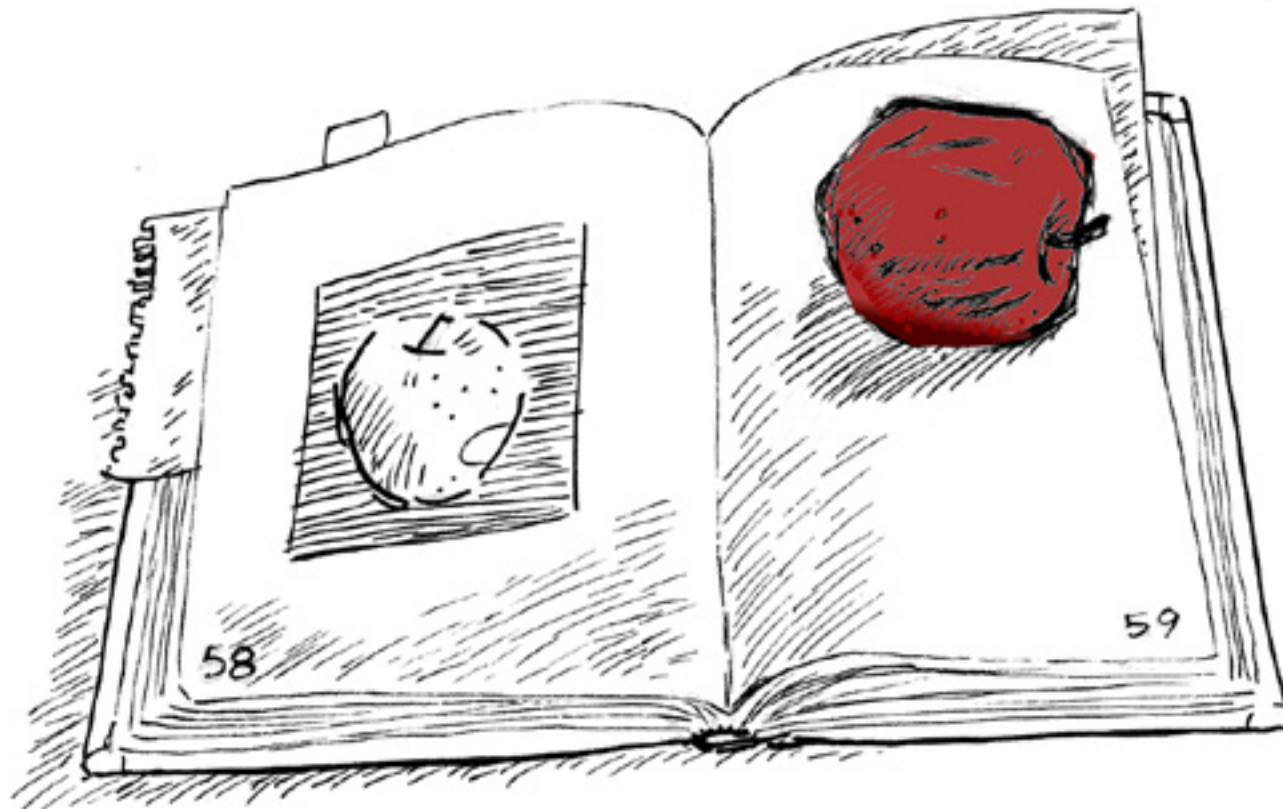


Comparison / Contrast



Comparison / Contrast Pattern

Next to the Narrative, Compare/Contrast essays are the easiest to use.

You find any similarities and differences between a selection of elements and compose your paper around the items.

Three possibilities result:

- discover the benefits of one element over another,
- re-enforce a common theory about the contrasts between two elements,
- or possibly find a similarity between two unrelated sources.

Either way you approach it, this form of essay is rather malleable:

- the entire output can be a comparison,
- or only listing of contrasts,
- or a combination of both. *{ Do not state the obvious.}*

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

Strategies for using this form of essay:

- Make sure there exist some form of obvious similarity between your subjects to begin with. You do not want your paper to wander off into pointlessness comparing two distinctly different subjects.

Find your purpose, and remain focused:

- There should be an end result in your analysis within the paper.
- In other words, if you are comparing two programs to use in the school program you want to be able to recommend one over the other.
- If the two subjects are seemingly unrelated, you will want to draw an analogy between the two objects to show how a similarity actually exists.
- Formulate a strong thesis which names the subject, shows your paper's focus and type of essay (comparison, contrast, or both), and states your main point.

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

Important Items to Consider:

- When organizing your points to compare and contrast, be sure to discuss how these elements operate.
- Most importantly, do not forget to use a parallel approach.
- You need to be consistent between the two unique elements.

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

Transitions

- As with any other pattern, transitions alert the reader to the pattern of choice.
- Use obvious transitions between paragraphs.
 - > Because you will be shifting between two different subjects, you need to move through the essay without jolting your reader unexpectedly.
 - > Common transition phrases:
 - comparison: likewise, in addition, also, in the same manner, similarly
 - contrast: on the other hand, however, but, alternatively
 - > These keep the reader aware of your strategy throughout the essay or individual paragraphs.

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

Remember this pattern can be used in a formal research paper, however it should not compose the entire project.

Research papers should combine many patterns, and not be limited to only one pattern in particular.

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

A good rule of thumb to follow with this pattern:

- When using a full comparison paper, you should mention a few differences but focus mainly on the numerous similarities.
- Yet, when using a full contrast essay, you should mention a few similarities but keep more of the focus on differences between the subjects.

Using these two strategies builds readers' interest in the material and keeps them guessing what direction you will take the paper.

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

Block format:

- When writing short essays, the block format works easiest.
- The writer in these cases devotes one paragraph to discuss one subject, then the second paragraph is devoted to the second subject.
- You then alternate between the two subjects offering equal space to each.
- The introduction and conclusion need to show *both* subjects.

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

I. Introduction

A. Begin with a sentence that will catch the reader's interest.

- state why the comparison/contrast is important

B. Name the two specific subjects and say either:

- they are (very) similar, in general terms
- or (very) different, in general terms

> Such statements act as your thesis declaration.

- ***However, do not use the following expression:***

“the two subjects have many differences and many similarities.”

The reader already knows this.

- ***You can say that***

“despite the differences the subjects are rather similar...” ***or***

“despite the similarities the subjects are rather different...”

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

II. New Body Paragraphs

- A. The next paragraph describes features of the first subject.
- B. Include examples proving the similarities and/or differences exist.
 - Do not mention in detail the second subject.

Concentrate on the uniqueness of the first subject.
- C. Do not forget, from this point forward, each new similarity analyzed or each new difference could be a paragraph onto itself

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

III. Subsequent Paragraphs

- A. The next section must begin with a transition showing you are comparing the second subject to the first.
- B. For each comparison, use compare/contrast cue words such as:
like, similar to, also, unlike, on the other hand.
- C. Again, be sure to include examples proving your analysis.

Comparison / Contrast Pattern

IV. Conclusion/ final paragraphs

- A. Give a brief, general summary of the most important similarities and/or differences.
- B. Restate the thesis in different words, which reaffirms your findings.

Never repeat topic points using the same wording.

Your most important information is shown in your conclusion.